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FOREWORD TO THE SYMPOSIUM "RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANT SPECIES IN NEW ENGLAND"

This series of papers was presented at the Symposium on Rare and Endangered Plant Species in New England, May 4-5, 1979, at the Harvard University Science Center, on the occasion of the 755th meeting of the New England Botanical Club. This number of *Rhodora* and the Symposium reflect some of the Club's new activities on the flora of New England. The accounts of endangered plant species for each of the six New England States represent a preliminary phase of the work of a committee chaired by William D. Countryman. The ultimate goal of this group is a synthesis of the state reports into a comprehensive treatment of the endangered species of the whole region.

The accomplishments of individuals concerned with the Symposium merit recognition in addition to those whose papers are included here. Garrett Crow, Chairman of the Symposium, and Irene Storks, Co-Chairman, have coordinated events from the initial program through the review of papers for this publication. William Countryman, Katharine Field, Leslie Mehrhoff, Larry Morse, Norton Nickerson, and Richard Primack also served on the Symposium Committee and Christopher Campbell, Club Program Chairman, also actively worked with this group. The logistics and general operations for the May meetings were arranged by David Barrington, assisted by David Webb and Thomas Wendt.

Several other programs currently sponsored by the Club also focus on the New England flora. The Herbarium of some 250,000 specimens is being changed from the generic and species order of the 8th edition of Gray's Manual to an alphabetical sequence. New collections are being accessioned from floristically little known areas, especially in Maine and Vermont. Some early collections of

rare plants such as *Potentilla Robbinsiana* that extend the ranges of the species have been added to the NEBC collections and enhance the value of the herbarium. A committee on Plant Distributions is engaged in computer documentation of herbarium records for preparation of distribution maps. The goal of this committee is to produce a series of distribution maps similar to those done for the Atlas of the British Flora. Programs are also being developed between the Club and other regional organizations for the acquisition of distribution records based on a current census of species.

The emphasis on rare and endangered species brings into focus larger problems concerning our knowledge of the general flora of New England. Several papers in the Symposium relating to analyses of rare species or populations signal the need for similar work to be done on wide ranging or aggressive plants. The New England flora is certainly one of the best known in the country but much is still to be learned about the relations of the species. The Club can serve as a vital resource in the development and documentation of new data on the species and the flora.

The Symposium was made possible by support from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the participation of Richard Dyer, Botanist, of the Endangered Species Office also indicates their concern for the work. It was my special pleasure to accept the 1979 Achievement Award from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in behalf of the Club, for its dedicated efforts to protect the rare and endangered flora of New England.

ALICE F. TRYON, PRESIDENT
NEW ENGLAND BOTANICAL CLUB